

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 07122 231833Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7122

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF DIVORCE REFERENDUM

REF: ROME A-301; ROME 6742

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: WITH ALMOST TWO WEEKS NOW PAST SINCE ITALY'S LOPSIDED DIVORCE REFERENDUM, THERE ARE STILL NO IMMEDIATE SIGNS OF EARLY DANGER TO THE RUMOR GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, SOCIALISTS ARE STILL CROWING OVER PRO-DIVORCE VICTORY, AND GIVE STRONG SIGNS THAT HENCEFORTH PSI WILL PROVE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT PARTNER FOR DC AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS ARE STILL DIGESTING REFERENDUM DEFEAT AND HAVE PUT OFF MAJOR POLICY DEBATE UNTIL AFTER SARDINIAN ELECTIONS. FANFANI'S AUTHORITY WITHIN THE PARTY HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT WEAKENED, ALTHOUGH MOST PARTY LEADERS SEEM DISINCLINED TO CHALLENGE HIM OPENLY FOR THE PRESENT. AT THIS STAGE, NO ONE IS PREDICTING SERIOUS CONFRONTATIONS WITHIN GOVERNMENT UNTIL AT LEAST AFTER JUNE 16 SARDINIAN REGIONAL ELECTIONS, WHICH MANY WILL TAKE AS INDICATOR OF EXTENT TO WHICH HEAVY PRO-DIVORCE VICTORY HAS OR HAS NOT AFFECTED ITALIAN POLITICAL BALANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. SOCIALIST PARTY DIRECTORATE MEETING MAY 21-22 WAS MARKED BY BROAD PSI ACCORD THAT SOCIALIST PARTY DESERVES SUBSTANTIAL CREDIT FOR REFERENDUM OUTCOME, AND RIGHTFULLY SHOULD EXERT STRONGER HAND IN GOVERNMENT POLICY MAKING IN COMING MONTHS. PARTY SECRETARY DE MARTINO REITERATED SOCIALIST COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATION WITH DC, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 07122 231833Z

BUT, LIKE OTHER ORATORS, LET DROP THINLY VEILED THREATS OF TROUBLE-

MAKING SHOULD SOCIALIST VIEWS ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES NOT BE GIVEN DUE HEED. SPECIFICALLY, DE MARTINO CHARGED THAT GOVERNMENT'S RECENTLY IMPOSED IMPORT DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS RUN COUNTER TO COALITION ACCORDS AND SHOULD BE REEXAMINED. IN RECENT NATIONAL MAGAZINE INTERVIEW, CLOSE DE MARTINO ASSOCIATE PAOLO VITTORELLI WARNED THAT OVER LONGER TERM A CONTINUED DC TENDENCY TO LOOK RIGHT-WARD DESPITE REFERENDUM'S OUTCOME WOULD RISK PROVOKING AN EVENTUAL "FRENCH TYPE" SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST HOOKUP.

3. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY DIRECTORATE MET MAY 22 TO DISCUSS REFERENDUM RESULTS AND PREPARATIONS FOR JUNE 16-17 REGIONAL ELECTIONS IN SARDINIA. IN KEYNOTE SPEECH ANALYZING REASONS FOR REFERENDUM OUTCOME, PERHAPS IN ORDER TO PREEMPT ATTACKS FROM PARTY LEFT, FANFANI INCLUDED FACT THAT MANY DC LEADERS HAD NOT CAMPAIGNED AS HARD AS THEY MIGHT HAVE, BUT DID NOT PRESS THIS CHARGE IN POLEMICAL FASHION OR NAME SPECIFIC OFFENDERS. HE RENEWED THE DC COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE RUMOR GOVERNMENT AND ALSO STATED THAT IN LINE WITH ITS CAMPAIGN PLEDGES TO PUSH FOR A COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY LAW, THE DC WILL SET UP A NEW PARTY OFFICE TO CONSIDER PROBLEMS OF THE FAMILY. IN ENSUING DEBATE, MOST PARTY LEADERS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DONAT-CATTIN (FORZE NUOVE) AND GALLONI (BASE) REFRAINED FROM ATTACKING FANFANI LEADERSHIP AND MAINTAINED REASONABLY UNITED, SELF PROTECTIVE FRONT WHICH HAS CHARACTERIZED THE DC POSTURE SINCE MAY 12. PREDOMINATE THEME WAS NEED FOR PARTY TO REEXAMINE ITS ORGANIZATION AND POLICY IN WAKE OF REFERENDUM DEFEAT AND SEEK TO INCREASE ITS APPEAL TO A WIDER ELECTORAL BASE. HOWEVER, FORMAL DEBATE ON POSSIBLE NEW DIRECTIONS FOR DC POLICY POSTPONED UNTIL NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING LATER IN SUMMER.

4. COMMENT: NOTHING ON HORIZON SUGGEST EARLY TROUBLE FOR RUMOR GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH PRESENTLY UNFORESEEN DEVELOPMENTS COULD CHANGE PICTURE QUICKLY. FOR THE MOMENT, ATTENTION CENTERS ON THE SARDINIAN REGIONAL ELECTIONS AND SCATTERED MINOR LOCAL CONTESTS ON JUNE 16 AND 17, WHICH MANY WILL INTERPRET (JUSTIFIABLY OR NOT) AS AN INDICATOR OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE REFERENDUM OUTCOME HAS AFFECTED ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES. DC DIRECTORATE SESSION SHOWS THAT DC STILL ENGAGED IN DIGESTING AT THIS TIME OPENLY TO PIN BLAME ON FANFANI. THIS DOES NOT MEAN FANFANI IS HOME FREE. DC PROPENSITY IS TO AWAIT SARDINIA ELECTIONS, WHICH SOME DC LEADERS FEAR WILL GO BADLY FOR THEIR PARTY, BEFORE
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PAGE 03 ROME 07122 231833Z

SEEKING AN ASSESSMENT OF FANFANI'S LEADERSHIP ROLE.VOLPE

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